WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Coconut disease in Orissa

2359. SHRI MAN MOHAN SAMAL:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that coconut crop in Orissa has been facing threat of mite in coastal districts, where about 70 per cent of the crop has been affected, as reported in The Indian Express dated the 10th September, 2002;

(b) whether Government are also aware that fund crunch has been holding preventive measures, as the Central assistance through Coconut Development Board is awaited; and

(c) if so, whether the Central assistance has since been released; if not, by when it would be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The incidence of coconut mite was reported in some parts of coastal districts of Orissa. As per the survey conducted by the State Department of Horticulture during July, 2002, around 2.41 lakh palms are infested by mite.

(b) and (c) After the report of incidence of coconut mite in Orissa in 2001, Coconut Development Board immediately released an amount of Rs. 16.00 lakhs during 2001 -2002 under its Integrated Pest Management Programme for carrying out prophylactic spray against the pest covering two lakh palms to prevent further spread of the pest.

Storage facility for onions

2360. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is **a** fact that no dedicated storage facility exists to prolong the life of onions in the country, by which the farmers are selling their onions at low prices; and